United Nations A/69/826

General Assembly

Distr.: General
20 March 2015

Original: English

Sixty-ninth session
Agenda items 132 and 115

Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Statute of the United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/69/L.55

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the statement submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/69/19) on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/69/L.55, on the statute of the United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize. The statement was submitted in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. During its consideration of the statement, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarifications, concluding with responses received on 16 March 2015.

2. Under the terms of draft resolution A/69/L.55, the General Assembly would decide to adopt the statute of the United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize, which is annexed to that draft resolution. The Advisory Committee recalls that the Assembly, in its resolution 68/275, decided to establish the Prize and requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the President of the Assembly, to establish within six months of the adoption of the resolution the criteria and procedures for bestowing the Prize, to be adopted by the Assembly not later than 30 November 2014.

3. The proposed statute specifies the aim of the United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize (article 1) and sets out criteria and procedures for the Prize (article 2), the nomination of candidates (article 3) and the Committee charged with selecting the recipients of the Prize (article 4). Under the terms of the proposed statute:

(a) The Prize shall be presented once every five years as a tribute to the outstanding achievements and contributions of two individuals (one female and one

15-04512 (E) 200315

Please recycle

male), not to be selected from the same geographic region; it shall be a plaque engraved with an appropriate citation and a relevant quotation and be awarded in recognition of the humility of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela; and it shall be presented by the Secretary-General at an award ceremony that shall be part of the commemoration by the General Assembly of Nelson Mandela International Day (18 July) at United Nations Headquarters (see paras. 5 and 6 below);

(b) The first Prize is expected to be awarded in 2015. The Committee is requested, on an exceptional, one-time basis, to take appropriate streamlined measures for the first bestowing of the Prize;

(c) The Department of Public Information shall serve as the secretariat of the Committee and shall publicize the Prize on existing websites of the United Nations and through existing communication and outreach channels.

Activities related to the implementation of the draft resolution

4. The Secretary-General assumes that, given the tight time frame for the administration of the award process in 2015, including the establishment of the Committee, the nomination and selection of the laureates and the presentation of the Prize, the first award ceremony would be held in September 2015 on an exceptional basis (see A/C.5/69/19, paras. 5 and 9). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that it was the understanding of the Secretariat that the inaugural Prize would be awarded during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

5. The Advisory Committee enquired as to why the Secretary-General planned to hold the first award ceremony in September 2015, rather than on Nelson Mandela International Day, in other words on 18 July 2015, as specified in article 2 (3) of the proposed statute. According to the response provided by the Secretariat, the process referred to in the statute, even if "streamlined", would be a time-consuming and resource-heavy project, and that the remaining time frame of three and a half months (from the adoption of the resolution to 18 July 2015) was considered to be tight. The Secretariat also took into account the fact that other United Nations prizes, such as the Human Rights Prize administered by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Population Award administered by the United Nations Population Fund, took between 6 and 12 months to administer. The Secretariat decided, therefore, that it would be feasible to award the inaugural Prize within the six-month time frame of the "streamlined" process.

6. While the Advisory Committee acknowledges the need for adequate preparation for the awarding of the first Prize, it notes that the scheduling of the award ceremony in September 2015, rather than on Nelson Mandela International Day, on 18 July, appears to be inconsistent with the proposed statute of the United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize. In addition, scheduling the award in September 2015 would have financial implications in terms of: (a) special event expenses ($5,000), which would not be required in 2020 because the award ceremony would be part of the commemoration by the General Assembly of Nelson Mandela International Day on 18 July (ibid., table); and (b) the request for a P-3 position for six months under general temporary assistance (see para. 7 (a) below), the requirement for which could be reduced to between three and four months should the award ceremony be held on 18 July 2015.

Additional resource requirements for 2015

7. As shown in the table under paragraph 11 of the Secretary-General's statement, the total requirements for 2015 are currently estimated at $101,600, of which $4,000 has been identified for absorption within the approved appropriation for section 28, Public information, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (see subpara. (b) below). Consequently, the additional requirements for 2015 are estimated at $97,600. The breakdown of the estimated resource requirements for 2015 is as follows:

(a) General temporary assistance ($73,900): one P-3 Public Information Officer for six months (for a detailed job description, see A/C.5/69/19, para. 8);

(b) Promotional activities and products ($4,000): the production of two Prizes (each costing $1,000) and the production and translation of promotional materials into the six official languages of the United Nations and a dedicated web page ($2,000) (the amount of $4,000 has been identified for absorption);

(c) The award ceremony ($5,000);

(d) Travel of the recipients ($18,700).

8. It is indicated in the statement of the Secretary-General that, pursuant to article 4 (3) of the proposed statute, the Department of Public Information shall serve as the secretariat of the Committee. Accordingly, additional general temporary assistance would be required on a short-term basis (1 P-3 for six months), in the amount of $73,900 (ibid., para. 8). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the additional requirement could not be absorbed under other staff costs for the Department of Public Information for the biennium 2014-2015. The Advisory Committee was also informed that the P-3 Public Information Officer position would be located in the Palestine, Decolonization and Human Rights Section in the Communications Campaigns Service of the Strategic Communications Division of the Department.

9. The proposed travel requirements are estimated at $18,700 for the two recipients of the Prize for 2015. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the additional resource requirements of $18,700 (calculated on the basis of business class airfare) could not be absorbed within the approved resources for travel of representatives and official travel of staff as those resources had been earmarked for other travel for the remainder of the biennium.

10. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with the most up-to-date information on expenditures incurred by the Department of Public Information under section 28 of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (see the table below).

Expenditures under section 28 as at 28 February 2015

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Object of expenditure	*Appropriation (2014-2015)*	*Preliminary expenditures as at 28 February 2015*
Posts	155 817.1	88 005.4
Other staff costs	4 961.8	2 480.3
Travel of representatives	650.1	216.3
Travel of staff	1 478.8	1 239.6
Contractual services	13 666.4	9 881.3
General operating expenses	9 515.3	7 655.9
Hospitality	140.3	78.7
Supplies and materials	1 601.0	848.3
Furniture and equipment	1 519.9	937.1
Grants and contributions	729.2	554.4
Total	**190 079.9**	**111 897.3**

11. According to the Secretary-General, no provision has been made in the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 for the activities requested in draft resolution A/69/L.55. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, the total additional requirements would amount to $97,600 under section 28, Public information, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (2015 only) (ibid., paras. 10 and 12).

Resource requirements for future bienniums

12. The table presented under paragraph 11 of the Secretary-General's statement also provides a summary of the estimated requirements for section 28, Public information, for 2019 and 2020. According to the Secretary-General, detailed resource requirements for the presentation of the next award in 2020 will be included in the proposed programme budgets for the bienniums 2018-2019 (for 2019) and 2020-2021 (for 2020). Similarly, the resource requirements for the presentation of subsequent awards will be included in the respective proposed programme budgets for the related bienniums (ibid., para. 9). **The Advisory Committee will consider the resource requirements related to the awarding of the Prize in 2020 and beyond in the context of the relevant proposed programme budgets.**

Recommendation

13. **The Advisory Committee has no objection to the proposed resource requirements for the Department of Public Information for the implementation of the activities related to the awarding of the first United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize in 2015. However, taking into account the pattern of expenditures under section 28 of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to make every effort to absorb the additional requirements ($97,600) requested for the Department under section 28 of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, failing which the additional expenditures related to the implementation of the activities arising from draft resolution A/69/L.55 should be reflected in the second performance report for the biennium 2014-2015.**